



# ARIZONA FIRE & MEDICAL AUTHORITY

## GOVERNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING

### MINUTES

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

### MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS / AFFIRMATION OF QUORUM**

Board Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order on Tuesday, March 23, 2021, at 10:30 a.m. The meeting was held telephonically due to social distancing requirements relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members Present: Board Chairman David Wilson, Board Clerk John Crawford, and Board Members Richard Bookie, Karen Gueltzow and Dawn Miller

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Fire Chief Rob Biscoe, Assistant Chief Chris DeChant, Division Chief Kane Nixon, Division Chief/Fire Marshal Eric Kriwer, Division Chief Brad Puckett, Captain Matt Burry, Acting Finance Manager Coaleen Poland, Administrative Manager Deborah Musselman and Authority Clerk Dusty Christopherson

Legal Counsel: Legal & Intergovernmental Affairs Director Lee Miller

Guests Present: North County Fire & Medical District Board Members Tony Sambol and James Young; South County Fire & Medical District Board Members Jack Arend, Bill Becker, and Diane Price

Media Present: None

2. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

There was no response to the Call to the Public.

3. **FINANCIAL SUMMARIES**

A. **Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Financial Reports for February 2021.**

Coaleen Poland, Acting Finance Manager presented the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Financial Reports for February 2021 and answered any questions from Board Members.

B. Fiscal Year 2021/22 Budget Development Updates.

Ms. Poland provided the Governing Board with an update on the Fiscal Year 2021/22 budget development process and answered any questions from Board Members.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approve Monthly Financial Report for February 2021.

B. Approve Regular Board Meeting Minutes – February 23, 2021.

**Board Clerk Crawford moved that the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Governing Board approve all items on the Consent agenda. Board Member Gueltzow seconded the motion.**

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AYES: Bookie, Crawford, Gueltzow, Miller, Wilson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

5. **CURRENT EVENTS SUMMARIES AND REPORTS**

A. Operations Division (Including Operations/Deployment, Support Services, and Emergency Medical Services/Training) – Current Event Summary for February 2021.

Chris DeChant, Assistant Chief presented the Operations Division Monthly Report for February 2021 and answered any questions from Board Members.

Assistant Chief DeChant noted that the Operations Division has started to see a slight increase in overall call volume of approximately 3% and are seeing an increase in small brush fires in the Tonopah area as well. The Authority is anticipating an aggressive wildland season.

Assistant Chief DeChant added that the Authority will begin the ET3 (Emergency Triage, Treat and Transport) Program and related training in late Spring, 2021, and will provide the Governing Board with updates as the program progresses. In general, in-person training across the Authority is down due to COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions.

B. Community Risk Management Division – Current Event Summary for December 2020

Eric Kriwer, Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal presented the Community Risk Management Division Monthly Report for February 2021 and answered any questions from Board Members. Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal Kriwer added that the Authority realizes an 85% save rate in fire incidents year-to-date.

Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal Kriwer noted that fully vaccinated Fire Corps members are

resuming limited activities such as lockbox and inspection activities, but not engaging in patient contact.

Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal Kriwer gave an update on development activities throughout the Authority.

Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal Kriwer explained that when there is a property ownership change or an owner changes their locks, it is the owner's responsibility to contact the Authority to schedule a key replacement which is completed at no charge to the homeowner. Occasionally, Fire Corp members sweep neighborhoods to perform maintenance on the operability of the lock and key.

Fire Chief Rob Biscoe explained that the Authority will continue to look for opportunities to partner with other community organizations (i.e., schools, churches) to train on how to best respond to large catastrophic events or mass-casualty incidents where Stop the Bleed training and kits may be beneficial. Authority personnel receive ongoing training for these types of incidents.

C. Business Division (including Planning/Tech Services/Emergency Management, Financial Services, Administration, and Human Resources) – Current Event Summary for December 2020

Kane Nixon, Division Chief - Planning presented the Business Services Division Report for February 2021 and answered any questions from Board Members noting that most of the administrative staff have been vaccinated and are either working in the office on a full-time basis or remotely part-time.

Division Chief Nixon stated that annexation meetings with property owners in both North and South County continue to take place and that the mailing campaign has increased communications resulting in additional recorded annexations.

Division Chief Nixon reported that I.T. Manager Chris Arrington has begun his grant-funded Cybersecurity Training courses and noted that there have not been any significant cybersecurity threats against the Authority to date, but staff is preparing for such an incident.

Division Chief Nixon explained that the Emergency Management Section has completed its support of Maricopa County's Northwest COVID-19 Vaccination Point of Distribution (POD) which closed on March 18, 2021. This POD administered over 50,000 vaccinations.

Division Chief Nixon reported that the Authority has received the 2021 Tax Levy Limit Worksheets for both North and South County. North County has a 6% increase and South County has a 7.3% increase for the net-assessed values.

Division Chief Nixon explained that recent EMS recruitment efforts resulted in six conditional offers to 4 EMTs and 2 Paramedics to begin employment on March 29, 2021. Recruitment for the open Finance Director position is ongoing.

Division Chief Nixon provided the Governing Board with an update on the COVID-19 statistics and activities globally, nationally, statewide, and locally, and answered any questions from Board Members.

Division Chief Nixon also gave a presentation on Fire Station 231. Board Member Booking requested all station presentations be posted on the Authority's website.

D. Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Chapter of the United Sun Cities Firefighters Association – International Association of Firefighters Local 3573 Updates.

Matt Burry, Local 3573 representative provided the Governing Board with an update on the AFMA Firefighters Charities activities for the month of February 2021 including the St. Patrick's Day event and raised \$2,600 in merchandise sales. Captain Burry announced that the AFMA Firefighters Charities will be raising money in April 2021 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association through the Fill a Boot campaign and is also sponsoring a team for the Salvation Army Golf Tournament in May 2021.

In response to an inquiry, Captain Burry explained that donations and purchases can be made through Cash App. User name: \$AFMAFFCHARITIES.

E. Correspondence Review – Correspondence received or sent by the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority which would be of interest to the Governing Board will be reviewed by the Board Clerk.

Board Clerk Crawford read the correspondence received or sent for the month of February 2021.

## 6. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Discussion and Possible Action relating to adoption of proclamation declaring April 2021 as National Cancer Control Month.

Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal Kriwer presented the National Cancer Control Month Proclamation stating that April is a special time dedicated to raising awareness for cancer prevention and treatment throughout the U.S, specifically for firefighters who face a 9% increase in cancer diagnoses, and a 14% increase in cancer-related deaths, compared to the general population. The Governing Board urges all residents and employees to get routine cancer screenings and utilize all available resources to help prevent a cancer diagnosis.

**Board Clerk Crawford moved that the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Governing Board adopt a proclamation declaring April 2021 as National Cancer Control Month throughout the Authority and Board Member Miller seconded the motion.**

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AYES: Bookie, Crawford, Gueltzow, Miller, Wilson

NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None

B. Discussion and Possible Action relating to adoption of proclamation declaring the week of April 18-24, 2021 as National Volunteer Week.

Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal Kriwer presented the National Volunteer Week Proclamation stating that the week of April 18-24, 2021 is an opportunity to recognize the impact of volunteer service and the power of volunteers to tackle society's greatest challenges, to build stronger communities and be a force that transforms the world. The Governing Board does recognize and celebrate our Nation's Volunteers who are being the change they want to see in the world, and especially thank the Authority's Fire Corps members for making the communities served by AFMA safer, stronger, and better prepared for any emergency.

**Board Member Miller moved that the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Governing Board adopt a proclamation declaring April 18-24, 2021 as National Volunteer Week throughout the Authority and Board Member Bookie seconded the motion.**

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AYES: Bookie, Crawford, Gueltzow, Miller, Wilson  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None

C. Receive update on Legislative Session activities.

Legal & Intergovernmental Affairs Director Lee Miller provided an update and answered any questions by Governing Board members on Legislative Session activities including the following bills of interest:

**SB 1298 - Fire districts; pension liability; financing**, this bill would allow Fire District's to borrow money to fund its current pension liability. The bill has passed the Senate but is under consideration by the House. A key issue is whether the bill will pass with an emergency clause. The "e-clause" will allow the bill to become effective immediately upon the Governor's signature. Without the e-clause the bill will likely become effective in early August 2021. The value of this bill is that it allows Fire District's to borrow money at current interest rates (assume 3%) to pay off a liability that is currently accruing interest at 7.5%. Fire Chief Biscoe stated that refinancing the Authority's pension debt could save the Authority's taxpayers approximately \$20 million in interest over 20 years.

**HB2381, PSPRS; local boards; consolidation**, this bill has passed both the House and the Senate and has been signed into law by the Governor. The bill was designed by PSPRS to update and streamline the process of adjudicating questions of pension eligibility. This bill allows each member agency to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with other area agency members to permit the creation of a joint local board to decide all eligibility questions. The assumption is that one board, representing many

agencies, will meet on a regular basis and develop better processes and more consistent precedents for these board questions.

**HB2506 & SB 1451, Workers Compensation; rates, firefighters, cancer,** these bills are duplicates of one another. Today when a firefighter is diagnosed with cancer and makes a claim for benefits under workers' compensation programs it is the firefighter that has the burden of proving the cancer occurred as a result of workplace exposures. These bills shift that burden, and it will be assumed that the cancer was work-related and eligible for workers' compensation coverage unless the workers' compensation carrier can prove otherwise. Each bill has passed its body of origin.

**SB 1351, Fire districts; amendments,** the bill makes various changes to the law of fire districts. The principal change is that a fire district board seat which is not filled at a general election is immediately declared vacant and may be filled by the board on the same terms as if a member resigns a board seat. The bill passed the Senate and is moving through the House.

**SB1108, tax omnibus,** the bill makes a wide variety of changes to tax law. The bill increases the fire district levy limit to \$3.375 for Tax Year 2022 and then to \$3.50 for Tax Year 2023 and later years. The bill also cuts the valuation percentage of commercial property from its current 18% to 17.5% for Tax Year 2022 and then to 17% for Tax Year 2023 and later. The bill passed the Senate and is making its way through the House.

D. Receive update on Worker's Compensation Pool activities.

Division Chief Nixon provided the Governing Board with a report on activities of the Securis Workers Compensation Pool noting that as of December 31, 2020 the pool is anticipating finishing the year with a small positive fund balance, realizing a loss ratio of 75.3%, including an administrative fee of 12.5%, which is less than the 15% quoted originally and anticipated for next year. To date, there have been 151 claims totaling \$972,000. The highest claims have been COVID related followed by lifting injuries. Moving forward, pool administrators are concerned about cancer related claims and are exploring options for covering cancer screenings more proactively to increase early detection and ultimately lessen claims, however this possibility will not be explored for another year or two, and instead administrators will make a push to bring more agencies into the pool. Currently there are about 56 Arizona agencies not in the pool that would be eligible to join if interested.

Division Chief Nixon noted that the Securis Board voted to approve a 5% rate increase for Fiscal Year 2021/22. The next Securis Board meeting is set for June 22, 2021.

E. Discussion and Possible Action relating to approving the submission of and declaring the Governing Boards support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) 2020 Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant.

Division Chief Nixon reported that Staff has submitted the FEMA SAFER Grant application for the 2020 grant year and have requested funding for three full-time firefighter positions. These positions will be roving positions and can be used in all areas

of the Authority but will have a focus in the Tonopah area. If awarded, the SAFER Grant will provide funding to cover 100% of the employment expenses for three years estimated at \$1,005,000. FEMA is anticipating less applicants this year because of other grant opportunities through the CARES Act. Staff has requested support and sponsorship from AFMA legislators and representatives in support of the application.

If awarded, the AFMA Governing Board will have the opportunity to vote on acceptance of the grant funds.

**Board Member Bookie moved that the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Governing Board approve the submission of and declare support for the FEMA SAFER Grant application to support the addition of three firefighter positions. Board Member Miller seconded the motion.**

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AYES: Bookie, Crawford, Gueltzow, Miller, Wilson  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None

F. Discussion and Possible Action relating to Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Expenditure – Facility Back-Up Generator Load Testing.

Brad Puckett, Division Chief – Support Services stated that the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) Standards require emergency stand-by generators be load tested at least annually to ensure proper operation. AFMA generators are programmed to auto start and run weekly for 30 minutes. Crews then perform an additional weekly check to ensure fluids are at proper levels and no leaks are present.

Staff is requesting funds to conduct additional load testing with Valleywide Generator Service and to allow Valleywide to provide any maintenance needed on the generators. Formal testing on the station generators has not been performed in the past but will be performed on an annual basis moving forward.

In response to an inquiry, Division Chief Puckett noted that Valleywide will charge an hourly rate for any maintenance required (in addition to the bid provided for the load testing) and any parts required will be additional.

Staff is requesting a total project amount not to exceed \$10,000 for all testing, repairs, and parts.

**Board Member Gueltzow moved that the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Governing Board approve the use of CIP funds in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 for the annual stand-by generator load tests and any necessary maintenance. Board Member Miller seconded the motion.**

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AYES: Bookie, Crawford, Gueltzow, Miller, Wilson  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None

G. Discussion and Possible Action relating to Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Expenditure – Station 341 Interior Improvements.

Division Chief Puckett provided the Governing Board with a presentation on the Station 341 interior renovation project and stated that phases 1-4 of the improvements, which included renovation of the bunkrooms, public access areas, laundry room, workout room, and turnout room, have all been completed within the previous allocated budget. Phase 5 of the improvements will include completion of the kitchen and day room upgrades and will encompass new appliances, stainless steel countertops, and cabinetry. To complete Phase 5 of the Station 341 improvements, additional funding is being requested. Additional funding is necessary beyond the previously approved \$122,000 due to the increased costs in lumber and construction primarily a result of the pandemic related manufacturing and shipping challenges and the increase in construction activity because of low interest rates.

The lowest bid received for the cabinetry alone was \$18,000, a significant increase over what was estimated pre-COVID pandemic. Phoenix Dispatch charged more than \$14,000 to install the CAD package in all the bunkrooms, which was required to bring Station 341 up to regional standards.

Staff is requesting an additional \$50,000 in CIP funds to complete this project.

In response to inquiries, Division Chief Puckett stated that the millwork is estimated to be completed in 6-8 weeks following delivery of the materials.

Chief Biscoe stated that with the additional \$50,000 in CIP funding the Authority will realize a fully renovated Station for a total project cost of \$175,000, which is a tremendous accomplishment for Division Chief Puckett and his team of support personnel and contractors.

**Board Clerk Crawford moved that the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Governing Board approve the use of CIP funds in an amount not to exceed \$50,000 for completion of the Station 341 improvements. Board Member Gueltzow seconded the motion.**

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AYES: Bookie, Crawford, Gueltzow, Miller, Wilson  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None



H. Discussion and Possible Action relating to Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Expenditure – Pre-Construction Contract for the Station 232 Renovation Project.

Assistant Chief DeChant provided the Governing Board with a presentation on a Pre-Construction Contract with CORE Construction of the first phase of the Agreement with the project contractor for the remodel of Fire Station 232 and will include: a review of plans, a construction timeline, and an outline of responsibilities for CORE Construction throughout the project. The primary purpose of the Pre-Construction Contract is to provide a review of construction processes from start to finish during the pre-construction phase and analyze real time cost estimates to assure the project is completed within budget, provides the best value, and avoids surprises and delays. The contractor will provide a minimum of two construction estimates during the design phase process and a final Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) which will include at least five bids from each sub-contractor for the project.

**Board Member Bookie moved that the Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Governing Board approve a Fire Station 232 renovation project Pre-Construction Contract with CORE Construction for an amount not to exceed \$7,500 using funds from the Authority's Capital Improvement Plan and authorize the Fire Chief to execute said agreement following final legal review. Board Member Miler seconded the motion.**

Vote conducted. **MOTION CARRIED.**

AYES: Bookie, Crawford, Gueltzow, Miller, Wilson  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None

7. **SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR FUTURE BOARD MEETING AGENDAS**

There were no suggested items for future board meeting agendas.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

  
John E Crawford (Apr 28, 2021 10:50 PDT)

John Crawford, Board Clerk






# AFMA Governing Board Meeting March 23 2021 Minutes - Final

Final Audit Report

2021-04-28

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## "AFMA Governing Board Meeting March 23 2021 Minutes - Final" History

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